<u>CLAIMS</u>

What is claimed is:

5   1.   A method for facilitating customs planning and clearance, the method comprising the steps of:

creating in an international customs server, in response to a signal communicated through a client device coupled for data communications through at least one

10   internet connection to the international customs server, a master customs planning record, wherein the master customs planning record comprises:

a master identification field in which is stored a master identity code for the master customs planning record, and

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a duty total field in which is stored the total amount of duty to be paid on goods identified in related customs planning records;

creating in an international customs server a related customs planning record,

20   wherein the related customs planning record is related through a foreign key field to the master customs planning record, wherein the related customs planning record comprises:

the foreign key field in which is stored the master identity code of the

25   master customs planning record;

one or more description fields describing the goods for import to a destination country, the destination country having an identity;

a duty amount field in which is stored an amount of duty to be paid on the goods; and

the identity of the destination country;

5   calculating duty on the goods described in the related customs planning record;

storing the amount of the calculated duty in the duty amount field in the related customs planning record; and

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incrementing, by the amount of the calculated duty stored in the duty amount field in the related customs planning record, the total amount of duty stored in the duty total field in the master customs planning record.

15   2.   The method of claim 1 wherein the one or more fields describing goods for import in the related customs planning records comprise:

a text description field in which is stored a textual description of the goods for import;

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a category field in which is stored a code identifying the category of the goods for import; and

a quantity field in which is stored the quantity of goods for import.

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3.   The method of claim 1 wherein each related customs planning record represents a prospective importation into a destination country of a quantity of goods of a category.

4. The method of claim 1 further comprising creating, in dependence upon the related customs planning record, a customs declaration form for a destination country.

5. 5. The method of claim 1 further comprising submitting the customs declaration form to a customs declaration forms database for the destination country.

6. The method of claim 1 further comprising submitting, to the customs service of the destination country, payment of the duty.

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7. The method of claim 1 wherein the client device is a workstation in a kiosk at an airport.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the client device is a workstation installed in the

15   back of a passenger chair in an airplane.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein the client device is a personal computer.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein the client device is a hand-held personal data

20   administrator.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein the at least one internet connection is wireless.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein the master customs planning record further

25   comprises an importer identification field in which is stored an identity of an importer.

13. The method of claim 1 wherein the related customs planning record further comprises an importer identification field in which is stored an identity of an importer.

5   14. The method of claim 1 wherein the international customs server is a software application installed and operating on one or more computers, the software application further comprising software routines storing and retrieving related customs planning records, validating goods described in related customs planning records against customs regulations stored in customs regulations databases, and

10   submitting to customs databases declaration forms prepared in dependence upon the related customs planning records.

15. The method of claim 1 wherein creating in dependence upon the related customs planning record a customs declaration form for the destination country further comprises reading customs data from a related customs planning record and

15   inserting the read customs data into a declaration form.

16. The method of claim 1 wherein submitting the customs declaration form to a customs declaration forms database for the destination country further comprises communicating the form as electronic data communications through at least one

20   internet connection.

17. The method of claim 1 further comprising validating goods described in a related customs planning record.

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18. The method of claim 17 wherein validating the related customs planning records further comprises comparing the goods described by customs data in the related customs planning record to customs regulations governing the goods described by the customs data in the related customs planning record and reporting to an

5 importer through the client device a result of the comparison.

19. The method of claim 18 further comprising storing the result of the comparison in the related customs planning record.

10 20. The method of claim 1 wherein the related customs planning record comprises a related customs planning record form having a structure, wherein the structure of the related customs planning record form is dependent upon customs regulations.

21. A system for facilitating customs planning and clearance, the system comprising:

means for creating in an international customs server, in response to a signal
communicated through a client device coupled for data communications through
at least one internet connection to the international customs server, a master
customs planning record, wherein the master customs planning record comprises:

a master identification field in which is stored a master identity code
for the master customs planning record, and

a duty total field in which is stored the total amount of duty to be paid
on goods identified in related customs planning records;

means for creating in an international customs server a related customs planning
record, wherein the related customs planning record is related through a foreign
key field to the master customs planning record, wherein the related customs
planning record comprises:

the foreign key field in which is stored the master identity code of the
master customs planning record;

one or more description fields describing the goods for import to a
destination country, the destination country having an identity;

a duty amount field in which is stored an amount of duty to be paid on
the goods; and

the identity of the destination country;

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means for calculating duty on the goods described in the related customs planning record;

5   means for storing the amount of the calculated duty in the duty amount field in the related customs planning record; and

means for incrementing, by the amount of the calculated duty stored in the duty amount field in the related customs planning record, the total amount of duty

10   stored in the duty total field in the master customs planning record.

22. The system of claim 21 wherein the one or more fields describing goods for import in the related customs planning records comprise:

15   a text description field in which is stored a textual description of the goods for import;

a category field in which is stored a code identifying the category of the goods for import; and

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a quantity field in which is stored the quantity of goods for import.

23. The system of claim 21 wherein each related customs planning record represents a prospective importation into a destination country of a quantity of goods of a

25   category.

24. The system of claim 21 further comprising means for creating, in dependence upon the related customs planning record, a customs declaration form for a destination country.

25. The system of claim 21 further comprising means for submitting the customs declaration form to a customs declaration forms database for the destination country.

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26. The system of claim 21 further comprising means for submitting, to the customs service of the destination country, payment of the duty.

27. The system of claim 21 wherein the client device is a workstation in a kiosk at an

10   airport.

28. The system of claim 21 wherein the client device is a workstation installed in the back of a passenger chair in an airplane.

15   29. The system of claim 21 wherein the client device is a personal computer.

30. The system of claim 21 wherein the client device is a hand-held personal data administrator.

20   31. The system of claim 21 wherein the at least one internet connection is wireless.

32. The system of claim 21 wherein the master customs planning record further comprises an importer identification field in which is stored an identity of an importer.

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33. The system of claim 21 wherein the related customs planning record further comprises an importer identification field in which is stored an identity of an importer.

34. The system of claim 21 wherein the international customs server is a software
application installed and operating on one or more computers, the software
application further comprising computer hardware and software comprising
means for storing and means for retrieving related customs planning records,
5   means for validating goods described in related customs planning records against
customs regulations stored in customs regulations databases, and means for
submitting to customs databases declaration forms prepared in dependence upon
the related customs planning records.

10   35. The system of claim 21 wherein means for creating in dependence upon the
related customs planning record a customs declaration form for the destination
country further comprises means for reading customs data from a related customs
planning record and means for inserting the read customs data into a declaration
form.

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36. The system of claim 21 wherein means for submitting the customs declaration
form to a customs declaration forms database for the destination country further
comprises means for communicating the form as electronic data communications
through at least one internet connection.

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37. The system of claim 21 further comprising means for validating goods described
in a related customs planning record.

38. The method of claim 37 wherein means for validating the related customs
25   planning records further comprises means for comparing the goods described by
customs data in the related customs planning record to customs regulations
governing the goods described by the customs data in the related customs
planning record and means for reporting to an importer through the client device a
result of the comparison.

39. The method of claim 38 further comprising means for storing the result of the comparison in the related customs planning record.

5   40. The system of claim 21 wherein the related customs planning record comprises a related customs planning record form having a structure, wherein the structure of the related customs planning record form is dependent upon customs regulations.

41. A computer program product for facilitating customs planning and clearance, the
system comprising:

a recording medium;

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means, recorded on the recording medium, for creating in an international customs
server, in response to a signal communicated through a client device coupled for
data communications through at least one internet connection to the international
customs server, a master customs planning record, wherein the master customs

10   planning record comprises:

a master identification field in which is stored a master identity code
for the master customs planning record, and

15   a duty total field in which is stored the total amount of duty to be paid
on goods identified in related customs planning records;

means, recorded on the recording medium, for creating in an international customs
server a related customs planning record, wherein the related customs planning

20   record is related through a foreign key field to the master customs planning
record, wherein the related customs planning record comprises:

the foreign key field in which is stored the master identity code of the
master customs planning record;

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one or more description fields describing the goods for import to a
destination country, the destination country having an identity;

a duty amount field in which is stored an amount of duty to be paid on the goods; and

the identity of the destination country;

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means, recorded on the recording medium, for calculating duty on the goods described in the related customs planning record;

means, recorded on the recording medium, for storing the amount of the

10   calculated duty in the duty amount field in the related customs planning record; and

means, recorded on the recording medium, for incrementing, by the amount of the calculated duty stored in the duty amount field in the related customs planning

15   record, the total amount of duty stored in the duty total field in the master customs planning record.

42. The computer program product of claim 41 wherein the one or more fields describing goods for import in the related customs planning records comprise:

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a text description field in which is stored a textual description of the goods for import;

a category field in which is stored a code identifying the category of the goods

25   for import; and

a quantity field in which is stored the quantity of goods for import.

43. The computer program product of claim 41 wherein each related customs planning record represents a prospective importation into a destination country of a quantity of goods of a category.

5   44. The computer program product of claim 41 further comprising means, recorded on the recording medium, for creating, in dependence upon the related customs planning record, a customs declaration form for a destination country.

45. The computer program product of claim 41 further comprising means, recorded
10   on the recording medium, for submitting the customs declaration form to a customs declaration forms database for the destination country.

46. The computer program product of claim 41 further comprising means, recorded on the recording medium, for submitting, to the customs service of the destination
15   country, payment of the duty.

47. The computer program product of claim 41 wherein the client device is a workstation in a kiosk at an airport.

20   48. The computer program product of claim 41 wherein the client device is a workstation installed in the back of a passenger chair in an airplane.

49. The computer program product of claim 41 wherein the client device is a personal computer.

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50. The computer program product of claim 41 wherein the client device is a hand-held personal data administrator.

51. The computer program product of claim 41 wherein the at least one internet connection is wireless.

52. The computer program product of claim 41 wherein the master customs planning
5   record further comprises an importer identification field in which is stored an identity of an importer.

53. The computer program product of claim 41 wherein the related customs planning record further comprises an importer identification field in which is stored an
10   identity of an importer.

54. The computer program product of claim 41 wherein the international customs server is a software application installed and operating on one or more computers, the software application further comprising computer hardware and software
15   comprising means, recorded on the recording medium, for storing and means, recorded on the recording medium, for retrieving related customs planning records, means, recorded on the recording medium, for validating goods described in related customs planning records against customs regulations stored in customs regulations databases, and means, recorded on the recording medium, for
20   submitting to customs databases declaration forms prepared in dependence upon the related customs planning records.

55. The computer program product of claim 41 wherein means, recorded on the recording medium, for creating in dependence upon the related customs planning
25   record a customs declaration form for the destination country further comprises means, recorded on the recording medium, for reading customs data from a related customs planning record and means, recorded on the recording medium, for inserting the read customs data into a declaration form.

56. The computer program product of claim 41 wherein means, recorded on the recording medium, for submitting the customs declaration form to a customs declaration forms database for the destination country further comprises means, recorded on the recording medium, for communicating the form as electronic data communications through at least one internet connection.

57. The computer program product of claim 41 further comprising means, recorded on the recording medium, for validating goods described in a related customs planning record.

58. The method of claim 57 wherein means, recorded on the recording medium, for validating the related customs planning records further comprises means, recorded on the recording medium, for comparing the goods described by customs data in the related customs planning record to customs regulations governing the goods described by the customs data in the related customs planning record and means, recorded on the recording medium, for reporting to an importer through the client device a result of the comparison.

59. The method of claim 58 further comprising means, recorded on the recording medium, for storing the result of the comparison in the related customs planning record.

60. The computer program product of claim 41 wherein the related customs planning record comprises a related customs planning record form having a structure, wherein the structure of the related customs planning record form is dependent upon customs regulations.